



ED REVIEW

June 18, 2004

...a bi-weekly update on U.S. Department of Education activities relevant to the Intergovernmental and Corporate community and other stakeholders



NCLB UPDATE (<http://www.ed.gov/nclb/>)

Last week, Secretary Paige joined U.S. Rep. John Boehner and Hamilton City Schools Superintendent Janet Baker to dedicate a bronze-and-granite sculpture celebrating Hamilton High School's role as host for the signing of the *No Child Left Behind Act*. "We met here in Hamilton two-and-a-half years ago," the Secretary said, "and history was made on that day. With the stroke of a pen, President Bush signaled that the time had come for all children, regardless of the color of their skin, their spoken accent, or their street address, to receive a quality education.... The reforms are now taking root across the country, and they are making a real difference." Each of the nine figures in the sculpture is a realistic portrait of someone affiliated with the district. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2004/06/06082004.html>. (Photos are available at http://www.ed.gov/news/photos/2004/0608/edlite-0608_1.html.)

The School Information Partnership web site, <http://www.schoolresults.org/>, which offers timely, relevant, and comparable school, district, and state data required to be reported under the *No Child Left Behind Act*, launched in January with just six states. Today, it boasts 18 states, with more expected to join over the summer. Overwhelmed? Take the tour at http://www.schoolresults.org/pdf/SIP_User_Guide.pdf.

On Wednesday, the Office of Innovation and Improvement (OII) unveiled the third of six booklets on promising practices to be released this year. "Innovations in Education: Successful Charter Schools" (<http://www.ed.gov/admins/comm/choice/charter/>) offers practical advice and concrete examples from eight charter schools, all of which are meeting state standards of accountability for all students under *No Child Left Behind*. The guide is divided into two parts. The first section provides an overview of common elements, including organizational structure, leadership and mission, novel curricula and

programs, efforts to promote a community of continuous learning, partnerships, and accountability for results. The second section provides rich descriptions about each of the schools featured. All of the schools, from Houston's Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP) Academy to the Community of Peace Charter School in St. Paul, Minnesota, have improved student performance over the last three years.



EXIT EXAMS

According to a recent report, the high school exit exams taken by a growing number of students measure math taught in most other countries in middle school and English that falls well below college admissions standards. Achieve, a non-profit organization created by the nation's governors and business leaders to raise academic standards and achievement in public schools, studied the high school exit exams from six states: Florida, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Ohio, and Texas. These states enroll roughly one-quarter of all high school students in the U.S. and one-half of the students who must pass an exam to graduate. On average, researchers found that students can pass math tests by correctly answering questions that appeared in seventh- or eighth-grade curricula worldwide. Similarly, students can pass English tests by tackling questions that resemble those on an exam developed by the testing company ACT for eighth- and ninth-graders. However, Achieve does not counsel against exit exams. "Though these tests are less rigorous than most parents and taxpayers might expect, the states that give them are doing the right thing," declared Achieve President Michael Cohen. "They are using the exams to stretch their students and schools beyond the previous performance levels. Initially low passing rates are yielding to improved performance." FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO

<http://www.achieve.org/achieve.nsf/StandardForm3?openform&parentunid=7CB3019548DAE51B85256EAE007461ED>.



SUMMER SERVICE

USA Freedom Corps' "A Call to Summer Service"

(http://www.usafreedomcorps.gov/content/for_volunteers/summer2004/) reminds citizens that the summer months are an excellent time to answer President Bush's call

to service, give back to your communities, and extend the compassion and greatness of America. Using the web site listed above, you can:

- Learn how you can spend your summer meeting some important summer needs.
- Borrow some of the great ideas the USA Freedom Corps has put together to decide how you can help out this summer.
- Use the USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network (http://www.usafreedomcorps.gov/content/for_volunteers/find_opps/) to search millions of volunteer opportunities from more than 75,000 organizations by location and your area of interest.
- Once you have a good idea for how you want to volunteer, use the Corps' resources for getting started to help you on your way.
- Keep track of your volunteer hours to earn the President's Volunteer Service Award.

About 63.8 million people volunteered from September 2002 to September 2003, up from about 59.8 million for the year that ended September 2002. The percentage of Americans who volunteered went from 27.4 percent to 28.8 percent.



GRANTS FORECAST

Be sure to review the revised (as of June 2) FY 2004 Grants Forecast (<http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/find/edlite-forecast.html>), which lists virtually all programs and competitions under which the Department has invited or expects to invite applications for awards and provides actual or estimated dates for the transmittal of applications under these programs. The lists are in the form of charts -- organized by the Department's program offices -- and will be updated regularly through July 2004.

Note: The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) has eight grant competitions currently underway. The deadline for applications range from July 6 (Research and Innovation to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities) to August 3 (Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers Program). FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/grantapps/>.



NEW APPOINTMENTS

President Bush has nominated former Virginia Lieutenant Governor John Hager to be Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2004/06/06022004.html>). Hager, who has used a wheelchair since he contracted polio in 1973, is a long-time advocate for people with disabilities. He has served as chairman or president of more than 30 boards and commissions in Virginia, including the Governor's Disability Commission, and most recently was the state's first director of homeland security. Diane Cullo has been appointed the new executive director of the Advisory Board on Tribal Colleges and Universities (<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2004/06/06012004.html>). Previously, Cullo was the American Indian Higher Education Consortium's director of communications, development, and programs initiatives. She lives in Alexandria, Virginia.



KINDERGARTEN CLASS

A new National Center for Education Statistics' study, "Full-Day and Half-Day Kindergarten in the United States," presents findings from the first year of the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Class of 1998-99. Its focus is on descriptive comparisons of full- and half-day kindergarten and the children enrolled in these programs. It also details the curriculum and instructional practices in each program. The study concludes with an analysis of the cognitive gains of public school children who attend kindergarten; not surprisingly, children in full-day classes made greater gains in reading/language arts and math over the course of the kindergarten year than children in half-day classes. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2004078>.



QUOTE TO NOTE

"To the world, [President Ronald Reagan] was freedom's best friend and tyranny's greatest foe. To Americans, he was the leader whose strength and sunny optimism helped us rediscover our own strength and national purpose. President Reagan's legacy

is felt in the classroom as well. He was not afraid to point out that we were a *Nation at Risk*, and he led the drive for higher standards, accountability, and greater choices. He believed that America is more than a nation; it is a promise and an ideal -- a 'shining city on a hill.'"

-- Secretary of Education Rod Paige (6/7/04)



UPCOMING EVENTS

The second of three NCLB Leadership Summits, titled "Increasing Options Through e-Learning," is scheduled for July 12-13 in Orlando, Florida. The conference will explore virtual education (distance learning, virtual schools, and other online education courses) as a powerful technology innovation in support of *No Child Left Behind*. There is a registration fee. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.nclbtechsummits.org/>.

The Education Industry Association's annual conference, EDVentures 2004, will be held August 4-6 at Northwestern University outside of Chicago. This year's theme is "Education for Tomorrow: Entrepreneurs Transforming K-16 Education," featuring expert speakers (including Deputy Undersecretary for Innovation and Improvement Nina Rees) covering best practices in tutoring, supplemental services, online learning, postsecondary education initiatives, private schools, and more. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.educationindustry.org/edventures/2004/>.

Please feel free to contact the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs with any questions:

Deputy Assistant Secretary -- Ken Meyer, (202) 401-0404, <mailto:Ken.Meyer@ed.gov>

Program Analyst -- Adam Honeysett, (202) 401-3003, <mailto:Adam.Honeysett@ed.gov>

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